



Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for yourselves. For my yoke is easy and my burden light."

Introductory Prayer: Almighty and ever-living God, I seek new strength from the courage of Christ our shepherd. I believe in you, I hope in you, and I seek to love you with all my heart, all my soul, all my mind, and all my strength. I want to be led one day to join the saints in heaven, where your Son Jesus Christ lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever.

Petition: Lord Jesus, meek and humble of heart, help me to take on your yoke.

1. Come to Me: If you struggle daily to do what is morally right even when those around you take shortcuts, then come to Jesus. If the life of selfish pleasure and illicit gain seems exceedingly attractive, then come to Jesus. If you are burdened with your patterns of sin and weaknesses of character that affect your vocation as a spouse, a parent, a friend, a consecrated soul, a Christian..., then come to Jesus. If life seems unfair and God seems distant at best, then come to Jesus. He calls us not to a set of principles and noble ideals, but to his very person. We do not follow rules for the sake of rules; we follow Jesus. Only when we have first come to him will we understand the need for the rules which simply help protect the dignity of this relationship.

2. Learn from Me: St. Paul admonishes the Galatians to live in the freedom of Christ: "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1). Yet in his letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul invites us to be "slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart" (6:5). To be a slave means that I submit to the will of another or am subordinated (unwillingly) to one stronger than I in some way. One who is a slave of passion, vanity, selfishness or any other vice is subject to that vice as something more powerful than oneself. But Jesus calls us friends and not slaves (cf. John 15:14-15). So, to be a "slave" of Christ means to entrust my life to him freely with the intention of following where he leads. Experience shows that he always guides us down the path that leads to our happiness and fulfillment, even when it entails the cross.

3. Rest for Yourself: These words mean "rest," not in the sense of cessation from work and struggle, but in the sense of peace of soul, joy and profound happiness. This is the rest that we all long for, the rest that will one day be uninterrupted in the bliss of heaven. We have each met individuals who experience this peace and joy despite their circumstances. Notice that Jesus does not promise to take away the burdens, the trials, the sufferings. But if we take his yoke upon ourselves, if we submit to his plan, his will, his love, he guarantees the joy. If you have never experienced it, then begin today; give him what you know in your heart he is asking of you. Although it may hurt at first, as does every yoke, this one brings the lightness of peace and the ease of joy.

Conversation with Christ: Blessed Lord, you lead me towards everlasting peace if I will simply follow, but following does not always seem simple. Give me the very things you ask of me: faith, generosity, courage, trust, love. With these gifts and your grace, I will have the strength necessary for the journey.

Resolution: Today I will pray an extra decade of the rosary for the persons who are farthest away from Jesus.